



CITY OF HALF MOON BAY

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MEMORANDUM

To: General Plan Advisory Committee

From: Dante Hall, Community Development Director
Bruce Ambo, Planning Manager

Date: March 20, 2015

Subject: **REFOCUSED – STRATEGIC UPDATE OF THE GENERAL PLAN**

This memo lays out the process for integrating the Refocused General Plan direction that the Council provided on February 3 and March 3. The Strategic General Plan Update will aim to develop the State-mandated Open Space and Conservation elements that are currently missing from the existing General Plan, focus land use designation refinements in the downtown core area, and address issues associated with traffic congestion, environmental hazards and vulnerability, and sustainability.

A three-pronged approach is envisioned leading to the Draft General Plan/LCP: (1) Neighborhood Listening Sessions, (2) Building Blocks of the Plan Update, and (3) Synthesis of Feedback and the Draft General Plan/LCP. This approach gives appropriate attention to each “building block” of the Plan, and includes a community engagement program to elicit feedback that will inform the development of draft policies.

1.0 Neighborhood Listening Sessions

The objective of the Neighborhood Listening Sessions is to listen to community concerns and ideas, and prepare the community to participate in the upcoming building block discussions. Beginning in April, staff will conduct a number of these Listening Sessions, which will be an opportunity for neighborhood groups to discuss issues and concerns. These meetings will also be an opportunity to inform community members about the status of the General Plan Update, its revised direction, and upcoming events.

2.0 Building Blocks of the Plan Update

The topic areas addressed by the General Plan and Local Coastal Program may be thought of as “building blocks.” While attention during the past few months in the Plan Update process has been focusing on land use concepts, land use is just one of the building blocks. The refocused program will shift attention to other building blocks in order to give due attention to open space, conservation, and sustainability. Transportation and land use components would be brought back to the community following progress on the conservation and open space building block.

This building block will address biological and agricultural resource protection, parks and recreation needs, sea level rise vulnerability, and environmental hazards. Analysis and public input will be used to develop a policy framework for addressing key environmental issue areas, which will become the basis for the new Conservation and Open Space elements of the General Plan.

Climate Action Plan

This building block will address the development of green goals and a Sustainability Plan. The objective for this building block is to engage decision-makers and community members in developing a Climate Action Plan with measurable goals to address greenhouse gas emission monitoring and reduction, sea level rise documentation and mitigation, alternative transportation and mobility diversification, and a sustainability plan to address behavior change.

Healthy Community Planning

This building block will focus on developing food and nutrition goals; linking planning with Half Moon Bay's agricultural heritage and surrounding farming; and orchestrating land use and transportation strategies to promote active living, and safe routes to school.

Transportation

This building block will address developing a functional and cohesive transportation network, improving emergency vehicle service and accessibility, fostering and supporting pedestrian and bicycle travel, and maintaining safe and convenient vehicle access. The strategies assessment will consider specific transportation improvements. Analysis and community feedback will allow the City to build on the recent update to the Circulation Element to prepare and updated Circulation Element that is integrated with land use planning.

Strategic Land Use Changes in the Downtown Core

This building block will address Compact Core land use possibilities, as well as implications of transportation strategies, sea level rise vulnerability analysis, and environmental hazards analysis. Building on the Compact Core concept, strategic land use changes in the core area on opportunity sites to further the Guiding Principles — such as increasing diversity of housing, and revitalizing Main Street — will be developed. The resulting land use concept will reflect a desire for modest growth, and include adjustments for impacts related to environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation.

3.0 Synthesis and Draft General Plan

Feedback on the building blocks will be synthesized in the form of goals and policies folded into an updated Draft General Plan and LCP. The Draft Plan and LCP will address the circulation network and improvements; land uses in the core; open space, parks, agricultural and biological resource conservation; and sea level rise adaptation. The draft documents would then be submitted to the Planning Commission and the City Council for review, before finalization, preparation of the Environmental Impact Report, and then the adoption hearings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMPONENTS

The community engagement program will involve a series of meetings for each building block (Attachment 1). At the outset, we would like to solicit feedback from the GPAC on the community engagement program and recruit GPAC members for outreach activities.

Neighborhood Listening Sessions

Staff will lead the listening sessions. At these meetings, highlights from information already collected will be available for reference. GPAC members will be invited to be present.

Building Block Open Houses and Workshops

Open Houses

Open houses would be hosted for each of the building blocks. The open houses will be scheduled at a variety of times to accommodate different schedules, and at a variety of locations. Each open house will present a number of informational stations, where participants may learn about the existing conditions and key issues relevant to the building block. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and leave feedback and ideas regarding the issues that are important to them.

Community Workshops

Community workshops will be held for each of the building blocks to allow for a deeper level of dialogue and community input. The workshops would be structured to promote small group dialogue to enable participants to explore options and tradeoffs, and see what preferences are broadly shared. Workshops will be designed to address issues that have been raised during the open houses and other meetings and be geared towards identifying potential policy directions based on expressed community needs.

Other Meetings

Where beneficial, additional meetings will be arranged to provide depth to the discussion of each of the building blocks. These will vary based on the appropriateness and value of different types of meetings for each topic area. Targeted outreach with Spanish-language facilitation will be provided.

Neighborhood and Stakeholder Meetings

Staff will meet with neighborhood and stakeholder groups, including any specific groups would be identified by GPAC and decision-makers. Suggestions for stakeholder groups for the four building blocks include:

- Conservation and Open Space: Conservation and open space organizations active in Half Moon Bay and neighborhood groups that have environmental concerns
- Climate Action Plan: State and local agencies, operators of local transit and public facilities
- Transportation: Sam Trans, the Cabrillo School District, and Caltrans
- Land Use: Business and property owners in and around the downtown area, households interested in more diverse housing types, and residents of adjacent neighborhoods

Moveabout Tours

A set of unique themed walking and bus tours of the Planning Area will allow residents to experience and comment on some of the community's most challenging issues, including traffic circulation, the protection of natural resources, the walk-ability of the city, and more. Tour themes could include visiting the City's parks, open spaces, and recreational trails; local habitat types; pedestrian trails and bike paths; and the downtown area.

Youth Engagement

Using a variety of interactive methods, the youth in the community would be invited to participate in the General Plan Update planning process by providing feedback on issues that are important to them. Feedback gained could help the City develop policies and strategies for improving the health of the community, reducing waste, and conserving energy.

Attachment:

1. Draft Strategic General Plan Update, Spring-Summer 2015 Outreach Program and Draft General Plan